Why should we care about heritage?

- **Heritage strengthens education.** HHS assists teachers in expanding curriculum, and trains school children and university students in skills that lead to future careers.

- **Research shows that cross-cultural understanding decreases racism.** HHS partners with the local Indigenous community and given sufficient resources can diversify across the Halton population 36% of which, according to the 2021 census, is visible minorities.

- **Heritage stimulates inter-generational conversations, strengthening family and community relationships.** HHS partners with other community organizations to assist these conversations.

- **Research shows that heritage is linked to improved health and well-being through community services.** HHS programs with seniors to improve their quality of life and mental health and provides volunteer opportunities for all ages.

- **Heritage gives residents a sense of place leading to a stronger identity.** Those proud of where they live invest in improving private property and neighbourhood services.

- **Heritage makes money.** In 2023, the Ontario arts, heritage, and culture sector in Ontario contributed $28 billion in revenue. Tourists interested in arts, heritage and culture spend 3x more than the average tourist.

What are the professional and ethical guidelines of deaccessioning?

According to the Canadian Museums Association, the sector's professional organization:

Unethical	Curatorially Motivated
Primary need is financial	Doesn't fit collecting mandate (eg: collecting focus; geographic focus)
Not adhering to collections policy	Refining collection: -Disposal of broken items; hazardous materials; contaminated items (pests/mold); too many duplicates
Ad hoc; rushed	Planned; rational; allowing sufficient time
Ignoring expert advice	Draws upon professional guidelines, experts, local stakeholders
No consultation/not best interest of the public	Community consultation

Source: https://museums.ca/site/deaccessioning_guidelines

What are the consequences of unethical deaccession?

Beyond the loss of heritage items and services, deaccessioning damages community trust of politicians, creates public backlash, and negatively impacts working relationships with other

community institutions. The petition on Change.org has been signed by 1823 individuals to date and there are more signatures every day.

Why can't the museum collection be transferred elsewhere?

A 2025 survey of 100 Ontario community museums shows:

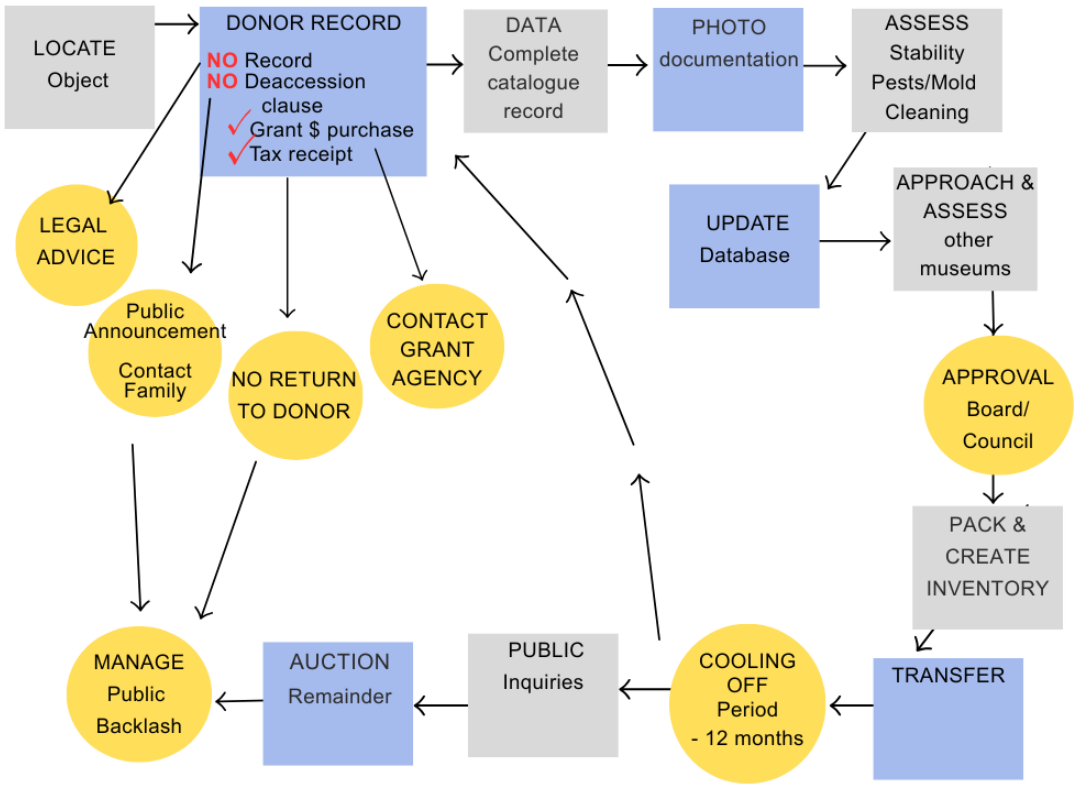
- 96% consider lack of space a key factor in accepting donations or transfer from other institutions
- 81% have overcrowded storage already
- 60% have insufficient budgets to buy materials needed to storage and properly care for objects
- a chronic lack of staff whose role is to look after artifacts and maintain databases

Because of the above conditions, existing museums have narrowed mandates that pertain to their most local area or a theme. Museums in Halton have narrow mandates such as the Halton County Radial Railway Museum, the LM Montgomery Museum, or the Waldie Blacksmith Shop.

And what about objects that relate to the former Halton County as a whole or the current Halton Region? Only HHS represents these larger historical areas.

What is the process of deaccessioning?

It is a lengthy and complex legal, administrative, preservation and relocation process.



What will it cost Halton Region and how long would it take?

The following calculations are based on recent case studies in Ontario but only relate to the museum objects. They also only cover staff wages and not supplies, moving costs, insurance, legal fees, and other items. Additional costs are attached to deaccessioning archival records.

Based on a conservative estimate of 4 hours/object x 18,500 objects = 74,000 hours. This equals 12.3 years with the current staff of 3 @ 40 hours/week each x 50 weeks/year. This doesn't include the professionally-recommended 'cooling off period' of 1 year. 74,000 hours at minimum wage ($17.60) adds up to $1.3 million.

Do the accepting organizations pay any costs?

The new museum homes must accession items as well, as shown in the process below. The calculations are the same: $1.3 million just for the objects and this doesn't include any supplies, cabinets, conservation, and software expansion.